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TEMPO Interviews Dean Kocher

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The Music School will soon begin work on the Dr. Thomas D. Pappert Center for Performance and Innovation, a major renovation. What can you tell us about plans for this new space?

Currently, Room 322 of the Music School is a large open space used for rehearsal, storage and sometimes for performance. Thanks to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Pappert we are going to transform this space into a state-of-the-art rehearsal, recording and performance facility.

At Duquesne, we are known for high quality performance in traditional genres and for composing, performing and recording cutting-edge music as well. The Dr. Thomas D. Pappert Center for Performance and Innovation will transform the learning environment of our school for performances of both traditional and newly created works. The Center will host a robust schedule of performances and Internet broadcasts that will reach out well beyond our traditional live audience. Our ensembles will have improved capacity for recording and playback of rehearsals, and most importantly the new environment will enhance student-directed music projects.

Mr. Thomas Pappert is a graduate of Duquesne University. Both Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Pappert were deeply saddened by the unexpected loss, during the prime of his life, of their beloved son, Dr. Thomas D. Pappert. This new creative space will be named in his honor. Talented Duquesne University students, faculty and families will be enriched and inspired by rehearsals, concerts, recordings and broadcasts that take place there, and the entire Duquesne community thanks Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Pappert for their generosity and vision.

This is the season for college admission applications. We know that many prospective music students and their families will read *Tempo*. What advice do you have to share about finding the “best fit” for music study?

There are over 600 accredited music programs in the United States. Each accredited bachelor of music degree program offers applied music (private lessons), ensembles, musicianship, courses in a major area of music study, and liberal arts and elective course work. We have high performance standards at Duquesne, and graduates of all four of our degree programs—performance, music education, music technology and music therapy—have attended premiere graduate programs en route to professional performance careers. The success of these talented students has been strongly influenced by their applied music teachers here at Duquesne.

Prospective students should consider the enormous benefit of studying with a top-level professional musician. Without the advantage of close contact with an active professional performer during the critical, formative undergraduate years, it becomes much more difficult for a student to achieve professional competence as a performer. Ensembles provide an opportunity to gain performance experience in a practical setting. So, if the other factors are relatively equal, first seek a teacher that will help you achieve your utmost potential and a school with high quality, large and small ensembles. When we hear from our graduates who have achieved professional performance careers, they look back to their applied music and ensemble experiences as critical to their success.

We always encourage prospective students to visit our campus and if possible to attend a rehearsal or concert. With over 200 public performances annually, it is quite easy to find excellent music making on campus.

Our founding fathers, the Spiritans, have created a University that, in the words of our Mission Statement, “is committed to excellence in liberal and professional education, through profound concern for moral and spiritual values, through the maintenance of an ecumenical atmosphere open to diversity, and through service to the Church, the community, the nation and the world.” Our successful graduates tell us that the values embodied by the Duquesne Mission have been a powerful, sustaining force throughout their careers.

So, to sum up my advice for prospective students, they should seek an excellent fit with an applied teacher, excellent ensembles, quality academic programs and an institution with an inspiring and sustaining mission.



Julie Ruth (Dolan) Anto

Julie Ruth (Dolan) Anto, MT-BC, MA-CAT, an alumna of the music therapy program, is shown with a group of children in Jordan, where she currently lives. In addition to forming a music therapy group for special needs children at an international school, she teaches in a newly launched bachelor in music therapy degree program at Jordan's National Music Conservatory.



Photos by Kamie Schoonhoven, Duquesne University Women's Advisory Board



A Musical Tribute to Robert Shankovich and Carolyn Shankovich

On April 4, 2009, we celebrated the careers, accomplishments and years of service to the University and the community of Professor Emeritus Robert Shankovich and Professor Carolyn Shankovich. The event included a luncheon and performance by the Voices of Spirit. The School of Music presented the professors with several gifts to thank them for their years of service, including a book of memories, comprised of materials submitted by former students.